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MEMORY CARD

RETRO GAMING MAGAZINE

Kirby 64

The Crystal Shards

A childhood favorite

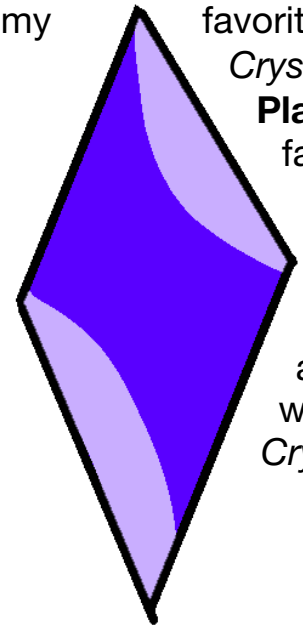
Big changes coming to Memory Card Zine!

FEBRUARY 2026

FEBRUARY ALREADY???

Can you believe it? 2026 is upon us… wait, what? It's already FEBRUARY?! I could have sworn it was just Christmas last week! Where does the time go? Well, I can tell you where it *hasn't* been going. This very zine. Yes it's about time I break the silence. Yes, *I.* The one writing this. The sole editor, writer, illustrator, and publisher. No more of this "we" nonsense. I am one woman making a fanzine for what she wants. Not a studio. Not a corporately funded advertfest. One woman. And that's okay. I don't wanna be anything more than one woman. True, it would be nice to have some writing help, and playtesters to help get screenshots from games, and some sponsors to get some money rolling in… but I don't *need* that. And I'm tired of pretending like I do. I think my early attempts to make a magazine were so caught up in being "official" and "professional" that I lost sight of what I wanted. I started this because I wanted one thing: a good, modern version of retro gamer magazines. But would it really be "tubular" of me to fake being more than I am? Is it "rad" to work yourself out of enjoying your time just to fill a page quota that YOU made up YOURSELF? Of course not. I just couldn't keep it up. I love video games, but trying to force myself through 8 of them a month just to write some half-assed "micro-review" was tiring. So I'm changing it up. Instead of some sort of forced "mainstay segments" or begging for fan mail, I'm doing this MY way. I'll publish what I want to talk about. Will it be as big as a true magazine? No. But I'm not doing this for you. This whole operation is for me. You can like it or not like it. I don't care. Because I'm not making a *maga*zine. I'm making a ZINE. Small. Indie. Unrefined. 100% human. If you're still reading this, then I assume you're still interested. Thanks for sticking around. Now, let's move into 2026 the right way. **Our** way.

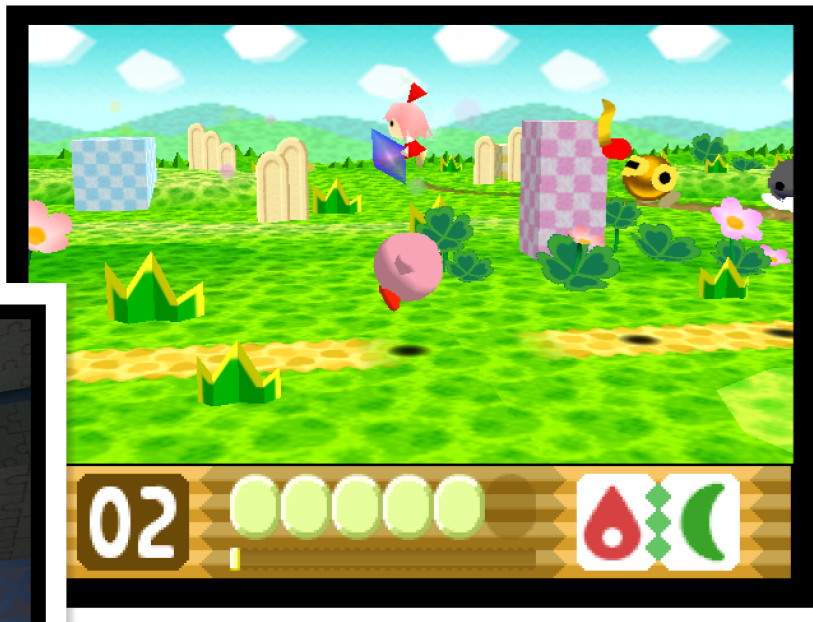
So, now that the melodrama is over, what exactly *am* I doing? Well, today's issue is on one of my favorite games from when I was a kid. 2000's *Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards!* What?! A **Nintendo PlayStation** fanzine?! Yeah, I was game?! In a mostly-actually quite a Nintendo fan as a kid. And a lot of my childhood was shaped by them. Now, beit because I'm more mature or edgier or maybe it just speaks to me more, but I prefer a lot of classic PlayStation titles over most N64 games. And don't worry, I play so many PS games that an issue about a Nintendo game won't ruin my reputation. So without further ado, here's my review of *Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards.*

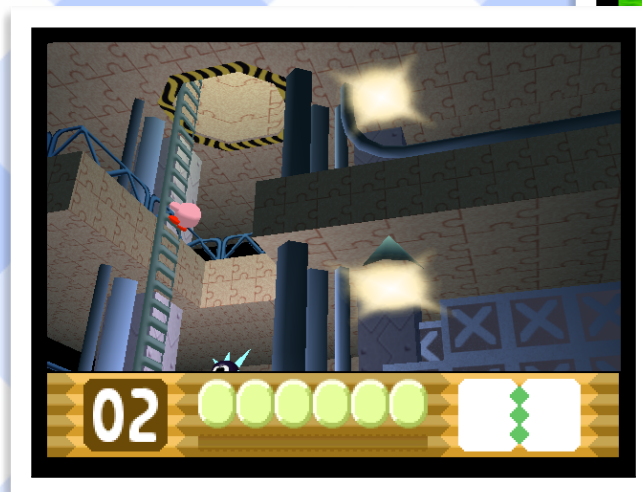


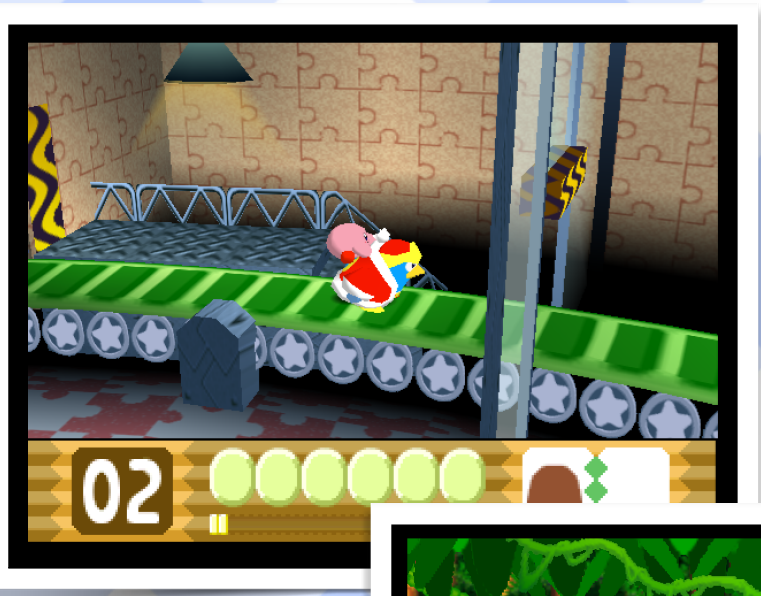
KIRBY 64
THE CRYSTAL SHARDS

If there's one word that best describes *Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards,* it would be "odd." Not that such a thing would be out of place in the series, ever since 1991 the Kirby series has made a name for itself with its dreamlike style, but *Crystal Shards* feels more bizarre than it's predecessors. Being the first Kirby game to be in the (then) impressive third dimension, it feels very similar to 1996's *Pandemonium!*, another primitive 2.5D platform game. Blocky environments, heavy reliance on spritework, nonsensical level design, it all reeks of early 90s 3D gaming… despite releasing the same year as the PS2. But it's still graphically impressive. Despite my previous comments, unlike *Pandemonium!, Kirby 64* presents richer graphical features that make it seem right at home alongside some GameCube games. It really made the most of not releasing until the end of it's system's lifetime.

In the game you play as Kirby, the iconic pink baby star warrior who befriends a fairy named Ribbon, who tells him that her home planet, Ripple Star (just one of many "stars" you explore in the game) has been invaded by a malevolent creature called Dark Matter, a returning foe from the previous game, 1997's *Kirby's Dreamland 3* (another favorite but that's a story for another time). Dark Matter begins invading Kirby's home planet as well, so it's up to Kirby, Ribbon, and the various other friends you meet, such as Waddle Dee, Adeline, and King Dedede, to travel across the galaxy to find the source of the invasion and destroy it.







Throughout the game, like its predecessor, has three crystals to collect in each stage. Usually one of them is in plain sight, one of them is hidden behind a boss, and the last one is hidden somewhere in the stage that requires a specific ability combination to access. The crystals don't do much in the stage, but if you are missing even a single one by the end, *you're going to be sorry.* And about those ability combinations - the series mainstay Copy Abilities return, but with a twist! If Kirby ejects an ability and combines it with another enemy, a whole new ability will be revealed! The combinations range from suped-up versions of regular abilities to overpowered screen wipers. Half of the fun is just seeing what each combination can do!

The game sees you exploring 8 different planets, marking the first time Kirby, the *star* warrior, has left his home planet. Each planet (or Star, as their referred to) has 5 stages and a boss fight, with a few exceptions, but we wouldn't wanna spoil the ending. *wink*
Each of the planets is basically two themes in one, making for a lot of variety despite only a few stages per planet.

In my opinion, *Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards* is a must play for any N64 fan. Despite coming late enough into the system's lifecycle that it was inherently dead on arrival, it holds up well today and is easily one of the best Kirby games.

Done already?

Yep, as I said, issues will be a lot shorter from now on. After all, it's not like I'm so mega journalist getting all the hottest info right of the press! But if I'm being honest, despite less content, I feel like this might be my best issue yet! It feels good to be liberated from the pressure of a professional length magazine. So what's next? Will I continue to do monthly issues? Hopefully yes! But who knows? Life has a mysterious way of getting in the way of things and some things just slip through the cracks. Maybe I'll develop a cult following and this zine will become a beloved publication, or maybe I'll forget about all of it and Memory Card will end just like accessories that it's named after - obsolete and useless. But I hope not. I'll keep it up as long as I can. I promise. And I promise to never go back on that promise. I did this for me. To see the magazine I wished I could grow up reading, and dammit I hope I can be that for someone else too. A loving tribute to a simpler time. Not many people seem to share my vision, but I hope that I can inspire someone to think about it and maybe even start their own magazine in the same way I did. But for now, even if it's only one story per issue, I think I'm doing pretty good. So make sure to show up next month for my next issue where I'll talk about one of my favorite survival horror classics! Which one? You'll have to tune in to find out! Thank you for reading and have a good 2026!